

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Troubled waters

We live in a time of "emerging" churches, "satellite campuses" and "blended" worship services. Some churches have dropped "Baptist" from their names, and some now refer to Sunday School not as Sunday School but as "Bible Study Hour." That is, if they haven't dropped Sunday School altogether in favor of small home meetings during the week.

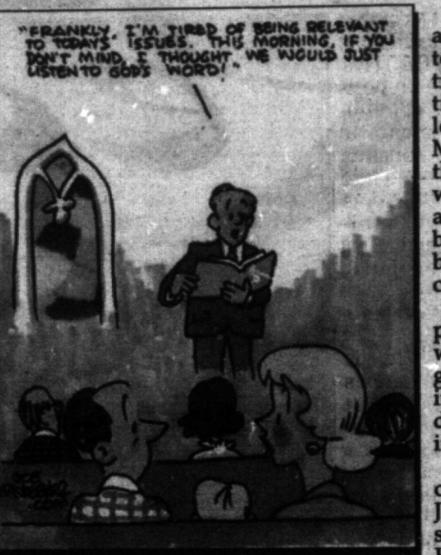
"We don't have a worship service at my church any longer; we have an entertainment hour," lamented a Mississippi Baptist not long ago. "My pastor doesn't even bring his Bible to the pulpit on Sunday," said another Mississippi Baptist from the other side of the state. "All we hear are lectures on pop culture and 'feel-good-about-yourself' Joel Osteen-style messages." (Osteen is a popular TV preacher from a Word of Faith background.)

The Journey, a St. Louis church plant, was featured on network television some time ago for Theology at the Bottlenecks, a church-sponsored "discussion group" that meets over beer in a bar.

"You sit down over a glass of wine or a pint of ale or something like that, and you can connect with people more," one attendee told the television crew.

It's safe to say that the Christian Church has undergone a few changes over its 2000-year history. The Church has adapted to circumstances, good and bad. Some of those changes turned out well, and some were mistakes (to say the least). Many of the good ideas served a purpose and were retired after a very useful life. Many of the bad ideas have come and gone too. Some of the good has stuck around, as has some of the bad.

The point is that while all change is not good, change is not entirely bad, either. In some of the examples above, people have taken change too far in an effort to respond to cultural pressures they are apparently feeling. Such cultural pressure is not isolated to Mississippi Baptists or Southern Baptists.



The Episcopal Church in America, for another example, decided a few years ago to condone and openly support the elevation of minister Eugene Robinson, a practicing homosexual with a live-in lover, to lead the Diocese of New Hampshire. Many of the member denominations of the worldwide Anglican Communion, of which the Episcopal Church in America is a member, have condemned that decision, but the Episcopal Church in America has been steadfast in its decision to bend to cultural pressure in this important area.

These are troubled waters we are presently attempting to navigate. It would be easy to simply say change is good — because it often is — but we must in all things guard against the watering down of the central message of our faith in the name of change.

Namely, that a loving and just God chose to reveal Himself through His Son Jesus Christ, so that all who believe can be saved and enjoy eternal life with Him in Heaven (John 3:16).

There are manifold ways to deliver that simple message to a lost world. The problem is that too many of us have gone too far afield, complicating the message or even compromising it just to get people in the door.

There's nothing wrong with conducting a Saturday evening worship service, but it is wrong to tell people there may indeed be avenues open to God other than a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

There's nothing wrong with drums and electric guitars in church, but it is wrong to say that sin and the eternal damnation it brings are outmoded or discredited concepts.

The lists, and the arguments about the lists, could go on and on, but one point we must never forget in our rush to contemporize all things religious: Hell is hot, Heaven is sweet, and Jesus saves. Let's get busy and take that eternally-unchanging message to a lost world (Matthew 28:18-20).

The rest will take care of itself.

GUEST OPINION:

Parents, wake up!

By Diane Montgomery
Ft. Worth, Texas



among their peers is judgment based on outward appearance. They're constantly being told by the world that their worth and potential popularity is based on how pretty they are.

We must instill in them and show by example that God desires an inner beauty which is what actually makes a girl beautiful (1 Peter 3:3-4).

• Help Preserve Sexual Purity

God places a huge emphasis on sexual purity and fleeing from situations that have even a hint of sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:13; Ephesians 5:3).

As their earthly guardians, parents are the ones in charge of protecting daughters from sexually themed situations and protecting their hearts and minds from things they can't comprehend fully or handle emotionally. Young girls today are bombarded with sexual images and messages that can do major psychological damage.

• Help Preserve Inward Beauty

So much of the influences on young girls emphasize physical beauty. Everything they watch on TV, see on magazine covers, and experience

Girls like those on Toddlers & Tiaras who are throwing tantrums, calling themselves divas, and saying to their mothers, "I can do whatever I want," will grow up to be women who are brash, conceited, self-worshipping, and who find value in their sexuality. They will be the queens and princesses on the throne of their heart, unless they let God become ruler of their hearts.

When girls are taught the ways of the Lord from an early age, they're more likely to become respectful, gentle, kind, and God-fearing women. They won't be filled with vanity or rivalry but with concern for others (Philippians 2:3). When girls are taught to be modest, virtuous and remain sexually pure as a way of glorifying the Lord, they're more likely to be godly women.

Ultimately a girl will make the choice to put God on the throne or not, but until that time comes it's a parent's job to give her the wisdom of God's teachings, show her who God is, and help protect her.

Montgomery is a student at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. This column first appeared at GirlsGoneWise.com, a website for Christian women. Montgomery blogs at www.unlockingfemininity.com. Her commentary appears here courtesy of Baptist Press.

Chinese authorities escalating persecution

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Chinese government intensified its pressure against Christians in 2010 for a "fifth straight year of escalating persecution," according to ChinaAid Association, a Christian human rights organization based in Washington.

Beatings, torture, arrests, harassment, and church demolitions are among the 90 recorded cases of persecution, a nearly 17% increase over 2009, according to a report released by ChinaAid on March 31.

The cases "are just the tip of the iceberg," according to a ChinaAid news release. "The Chinese government's stranglehold on information and the authoritarian regime's other security measures make getting a true picture of the extent of persecution impossible. Nevertheless, the fact that the documented incidences of persecution came from all parts of China and involved people from all levels of society makes the report a useful guide."

The report suggested the increase in persecution may have been triggered by the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo and the thwarted attendance by more than 200 delegates from Chinese house churches at the Lausanne Congress on Global Evangelization in South Africa.

The report stated that Chinese authorities, in addition to continuing to target house churches and their leaders in urban areas, are adopting three additional tactics of persecution:

• The government is severely cracking down on Christian human rights lawyers, who have increasingly defended persecuted Christians in the country's court system. More than two-thirds of persecution cases in Beijing involved such lawyers who are subjected to harassment, beating, and abduction.

• While the government is decreasing official prison sentences against Christians who can defend themselves in the legal system, Mafia-type violence and intimidation is being used which leaves Christians no legal recourse.

• The government is punishing Three-Self Patriotic Movement Churches (official churches) that have failed to submit to complete control. Congregants are beaten, churches forced to disband, and some buildings torn down.

The report documented 3,343 people who were persecuted in 2010, a nearly 14% increase from 2009. Detentions increased by 43%, and 336 house church leaders were persecuted. Overall, the report said persecution was more than 193% worse in 2010 than 2006.

The report, titled 2010 Annual Report: Chinese Government Persecution of Christians & Churches in Mainland China,

January - December 2010, can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/1EZTHV>.

Meanwhile, reports indicate the communist government in China may consider lifting its one-child policy — but that does not mean it will terminate its practice of coercive population control, says an American advocate for women's rights.

Reggie Littlejohn is president of Women's Rights Without Frontiers, a coalition that combats coercive abortion, and sexual slavery in China. She says a switch to an urban, two-child policy will not soften China's population control program.

The problem with the One Child Policy is not the number of children allowed," Littlejohn said in a written statement to Baptist Press. "Rather, it is the fact that the policy is enforced

through forced abortion, forced sterilization, and infanticide. Even if some couples will eventually be allowed to have two children, the Chinese Communist Party has emphatically not stated that they will cease their appalling methods of enforcement."

Evidence from the regions already enforcing a two-child policy shows the higher limit has done little to prevent the widespread aborting of girls in a country with a heavy preference for boys.

The "areas in which two children are allowed are especially vulnerable to 'gendercide,' the sex-selective abortion of females," Littlejohn said.

A study of the data from nine provinces in the 2005 Chinese national census showed 160 boys are born for every 100 girls, she said. A 2009 British medical journal analysis of the information concluded, she said, "Sex-selective abortion accounts for almost all the excess males."

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OFFICIAL DESTRUCTION — A photo smuggled out of China shows the moment the cross at the Chengnan Three-Self Church was torn down, when authorities in China's Jiangsu province forcibly demolished the building on Nov. 19 of last year. Churches that are members of the Three-Self Movement are controlled by the government, which licenses the churches and brutally prohibits the establishment of religious groups outside the front group. (BP photo)



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YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my relationship
with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a loving
relationship with Him.
(I receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

Looking back

10 years ago

More than 514 people attend the Mississippi Baptist Christian Performing Arts Festival at Ridgecrest Church, Madison. Over 100 different training opportunities were offered.

20 years ago

A new federal prayer-in-schools proposal exposes division in the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission over how to "return Christ to the classroom." Trustees believe the agency should support mandated prayer, but Executive Director Richard Land said such legislation is unconstitutional.

30 years ago

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

J IBWA NBOZ UIJOHT
UP TBZ BOF UP KVFHA
PG ZPV; CVU IA UIBU
TAOU NA JT USVA; BOF
J TQABL UP UIA XPSMF
UIPTA UIJOHT XJDI J
IBWA IABSF PG IJN.

KPIO AJHIU: UXAOUZ

TJY

Clue: I - H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Four: Ten

On this particular day, Youth Court was in session. Apparently, they were there because they had to be. The young man was watching what was taking place and he asked one of our workers, "What are they doing out there?" He explained that it was a prayer gathering with an emphasis to ask everyone across Mississippi to be in prayer and to Cover Mississippi in Prayer all year long. As the young man processed what he was seeing and hearing, he said to our worker, "Is that stuff

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Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

During the first three months of 2011 we held over 90 Prayer Rallies. The prayer gatherings took place mostly at public venues such as a county courthouse, city hall, or a park in the community. Sometimes the gatherings were in the bitter cold and at other times in the warm heat of the spring sun. A few of them were outside in the drizzling rain and some even took place when the snow was falling. Over 9,100 people attended these rallies, and for many — especially me — they each became a moment when we sensed that we were on holy ground.

Maybe the meaning and purpose of the prayer gatherings was expressed best by a young man in his mid-teens. He was not attending the Prayer Rally, but he was watching it. Let me tell you about him because even though he may not have known the Lord he recognized the Lord at work and touched on the very heart of what we were hoping would take place.

It was a beautiful day and scores of people were standing on a courthouse lawn. The prayer gathering was taking place, a number of people had led in prayer, and we had sung together. One of our men from the Baptist building just happened to run into this young man and his mom and dad who were inside the courthouse.

From a biblical perspective, you and I know that prayer changes things. It changed the disaster in the Red Sea to a deliverance experience. It changed certain death in a lion's den to a miraculous opportunity to proclaim the greatness of our God. It changed five little loaves and two little fishes into food for over 5,000 who were hungry. It changed a moment of hurt and potential bitterness as a man

real to you folks?" The reply came, "Why, yes it is!" To which this young man said, "I wish it was real to me."

At that point the mother said to the boy, "Come on, we have got to go!" She and the dad took the young man off to wherever they were supposed to be.

After the meeting, this incident was reported to me. While I never met the young man, I have thought about him so often and I have prayed for him repeatedly. I would desire for him that a genuine experience with our living Lord might take place in his life so that he would know that it is real. Jesus is real! His love is tangible and His presence is life transforming. Day after day as we were a part of these gatherings, our prayer before the experience was for everyone who came to have a fresh, meaningful, challenging, and encouraging encounter with God, and that it might be a God honoring and a life changing moment.

Prayer changes things. From a biblical perspective, you and I know that prayer changes things. It changed the disaster in the Red Sea to a deliverance experience. It changed certain death in a lion's den to a miraculous opportunity to proclaim the greatness of our God. It changed five little loaves and two little fishes into food for over 5,000 who were hungry. It changed a moment of hurt and potential bitterness as a man

died on a cross to incredible forgiveness as Jesus prayed, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

The prayer changing moments of the Bible are almost endless, but those same moments can take place within us. They did take place and they do take place. Out of these momentary meetings as crowds gathered to pray and more importantly as individuals encountered God, I have heard from many of them one after another, as they have expressed a meaningful, eventful encounter that made a difference because of prayer. Even today, I want to encourage you to stop, pray, and ask God to make Himself known afresh and anew to you and to be real to your heart.

In addition to prayer changing things, I am aware that if we are not careful, we change prayer. We start out our spiritual journey with Christ in prayer. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). It is at that moment that we experience the wonder of God lifting our burdens, taking our guilt, and cleansing our soul. Beyond that moment as we grow in the Lord, we may have a tendency to think that prayer is

Many churches have legacies, be it the long tenure of a popular pastor, a history of consistent numerical growth, a stance it took in the community, or simply how long it has been in existence. For First Church, Winona, that legacy includes a decades-long commitment to Cooperative Program (CP) giving.

First Winona is probably best known in the Southern Baptist Convention as being the home church of Arthur Flake. Flake's seminal work, Building a Standard Sunday School, which encompasses "Flake's Formula," has long been the foundation of Sunday School work among Southern Baptists. These days, however, First Church, Winona, is noted for its aggressive ministry through the Cooperative Program.

Aubrey Boone has been a member of First Church, Winona, for many years and has long been a champion for CP. "Over 50 years ago we decided that the church was a missions-minded church, and agreed to give 15% of our undesignated offerings to the Cooperative Program. Our goal was to increase that by one percent a year until we reached 50%. For a long time we gave one-half percent (more each year). We've never reached that 50% goal — you know how Baptists are. It went along real good for a long time, but over the last several years we haven't talked about it like we should have."

In 2009, the church gave 27.3% of undesignated gifts to CP. In 2011, 30.25% has been set aside for CP.

Dorothy Box has been a part of First Church, Winona, for 80 years. "My mother had me on cradle roll when I was two weeks old," she said. "We had gotten up to 32.5% Cooperative Program giving at one time."

"There were a lot of us who didn't really understand what the Cooperative Program was about," said Glenn Bourne, the church's chairman of deacons. "We knew it was about missions, but one of the things many of us didn't realize is that here in the state (through the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board) we had assets galore funded by the Cooperative Program that we never took advantage of to do ministry in the local area here. Several of us have been made aware of this, and that has made us extremely loyal to the Cooperative Program."

"You can't be loyal to something unless you completely understand it, so when we got involved in several things and saw how the money was being used, I came back with a whole different perspective on what we were funding and what we weren't taking advantage of."

"This all came about with the envelopes and the giving through Sunday School," said Box. "I remember when the deacons had to go around and knock on doors every Monday to collect money to pay the preacher. After the Cooperative Program, people were aware of what was needed and they gave. It's a

not as significant or maybe it is a part of the infancy of our spiritual life. Now we are bigger, more mature, and do not need that anymore."

In fact, sometimes we move on to the busyness of church life and the multiplicity of other aspects of our spiritual experience to the point where prayer is left behind. The fact is that while we may move deeper into prayer and broader into the understanding of what God is wanting for us, in us, and with us through prayer, we must never graduate to prayerlessness. Study the life of Jesus and you will find that there is never a point in His entire life and ministry that prayer was not a key component of what God was doing through His Son.

It is there where we hope to stay and live that prayer challenges us. In John's Gospel, Chapter 15, Jesus tells us that if we abide in Him and He abides in us, then we will bring forth much fruit. It is impossible for us to abide in Him or Him to saturate our being, apart from prayer. So every day and as the Scripture challenges without ceasing, we live in the atmosphere of prayer. If Satan can entice us away from prayer, he will keep us away from God, and thereby keep us away from the joy of living in the will of God. As the young man said, "I wish that was real to me."

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THE BAPTIST RECORD

SPECIAL EDITION - CORRECTED

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Church celebrates storied CP legacy

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor



PLANNING THE FUTURE — Aubrey Boone (left) and Glenn Bourne, laymen at First Church, Winona, discuss the need for Cooperative Program promotion in their church. The church currently gives 30.25% of its undesignated gifts to CP. (Photo by Tony Martin)

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Cooperative Program. I thought, 'You're walking the walk and talking the talk.'

"I had a pretty passionate discussion with a deacon about six weeks ago," said Bourne, "and he was talking about some choices that might need to be made concerning the Cooperative Program. I said, 'Let me tell you something. When the choice comes down to cutting on the lights in the building, that's the time we'll have to sit down and talk about this. Until then, you can forget about even bringing it up.' I might have overstepped my bounds, but right now we're far removed from that."

"One of the reasons I'm so thankful for the Cooperative Program is because I can remember when the missionaries would have to come around to the church and raise money," said Boone. "The schools had to come around to raise money, too, and the ones that had the best speech and the ones that looked the best got the money. Then God gave us the Cooperative Program. Then none of them would have to spend their time and money coming around to the churches. We could pool all of it together through the Cooperative Program and fund all of it. I can't conceive of anybody not wanting to take advantage of that."

"This all came about with the envelopes and the giving through Sunday School," said Box. "I remember when the deacons had to go around and knock on doors every Monday to collect money to pay the preacher. After the Cooperative Program, people were aware of what was needed and they gave. It's a

Due to an error in the Century Club supporters list in the Cooperative Program special insert of the March 31 issue, the dollar amounts under the headings, "CP Gifts," were incorrectly listed. The correct amounts can be found on pages CP-2 and CP-3 of this issue. The 2011 Cooperative Program budget on page CP-4 has also been corrected. The Baptist Record regrets the errors.

"We just need for folks to be made aware of these things. Some people have the idea that giving to the church is something they can or can't do. They don't realize the benefit they get from giving," said Boone. "As long as I have anything to say about it, we'll continue giving to the Cooperative Program."

2011 COOPERATIVE PROGRAM MISSION BUDGET

MISSISSIPPI'S HEARTBEAT FOR MISSIONS



Global Missions/SBC
\$11,633,185

Christian Education
\$6,747,000

Church Growth Ministries
\$3,908,630

State Benevolent Institutions
\$2,352,767

State Missions
\$5,541,024

Executive Leadership and Communication
\$2,819,339

GRAND TOTAL = \$33,001,945

2010 COOPERATIVE PROGRAM CENTURY CLUB GIVING

CHURCH OFFERINGS REPORTED ON THE 2009-2010 ANNUAL CHURCH PROFILE. COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GIFTS ARE ACTUAL RECEIPTS POSTED BY THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD FROM JANUARY - DECEMBER, 2010.

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$25,000 and below

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
NOXUBEE/MASHUAVILLE	2,185.87
PANOLA/PHARALIA	2,136.62
CHOCTAW/CROSSROADS	1,916.18
CLARKE/KNIGHTS VALLEY	1,875.00
METRO/METRO	1,845.00
MID-DELTA/MOUNT VERNON	1,778.20
COV-JEFF DAVIS/ANTIOCH	1,719.03
MONROE/ATHENS	1,646.00
PIKE/HOLMESVILLE	1,605.15
CLARKE/PLEASANT GROVE	1,572.25

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$25,000 - \$39,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
UNION CO/MYRTLE	4,993.04
GOLDEN TRIANGLE/WAKE FOREST	4,830.00
CARROLL/SHILOH	4,691.00
LAWRENCE/SHALOM	4,044.33
KEMPER/CENTER RIDGE	4,000.00
LEBANON/BEACON	3,977.63
YAZOO/ROCKY SPRINGS	3,344.03
MONROE/SPLUNGE	3,829.71
YAZOO/EDEN	3,823.94
PRENTISS/WEST SIDE	3,769.40

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$40,000 - \$54,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
WEBSTER/NEW HOPE	7,750.00
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CALHOUN/OLDTOWN	5,788.48
GOLDEN TRIANGLE/NEW MONTPELIER	5,740.65
MID-DELTA/LINN	5,648.80
LAUDERDALE/CENTER GROVE	5,361.80
SMITH/CONCORD	5,160.34
WINSTON/DRY CREEK	5,143.00
PEARL RIVER/NEW LIFE	5,083.02

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$55,000 - \$74,999

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YAZOO/OAK GROVE	8,610.28
WEBSTER/LOLLARS GROVE	8,405.72
MARION/EMMANUEL	7,993.00
WAYNE/RIVERSIDE	7,488.56
LAWRENCE/CARMEL	7,353.92
JACKSON/KREOLE AVE	7,304.00
CLARKE/PINE GROVE	7,190.00
MISSISSIPPI/MT VERNON	7,163.00

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$75,000 - \$99,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
WINSTON/CAVALRY	15,402.15
CLARKE/SHUBLIA	13,683.78
PANOLA/LOCKE STATION	12,192.23
MISSISSIPPI/CROSSBY	11,574.00
HUMPHREYS/BEULAH	11,446.20
ATTALA/MCCOOL	11,276.81
SHARKEY/ESAO/VALLEY PARK	11,134.45
ITAWAMIA/DORGEY	10,780.55
CHOCTAW/WEB	10,670.71
HUMPHREYS/FBC ISOLA	10,330.73

The Century Club

By David Michel, MBCB associate executive director for mission strategy

running from January to December. These records are audited each year, and each church receives a receipt verifying their gifts.

By sorting churches according to the two criteria, every congregation has an opportunity to be evaluated in comparison to other churches of similar size and giving capacity. While we celebrate every penny given to the Lord through the Cooperative Program, the comprehensive picture created by selecting one hundred churches spread over all giving categories helps Mississippi Baptists recognize the most sacrificial and courageous mission supporters among us.

Perhaps the greatest cue we can take for how best to recognize and celebrate generosity among our churches comes from the Apostle Paul, who wrote to the Corinthians concerning the practice of the Macedonians. He said: "They did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping God's will." (II Corinthians 8:5). Today, churches which are willing to be sacrificial in giving and missional in cooperating together with Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program prove themselves to be "keeping the will" of God and committing themselves to their fellow believers for the advancement of the Kingdom.

Second, from each offering category the ten largest Cooperative Program givers are chosen. The Cooperative Program data are determined by actual gifts received by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for the fiscal year.

They deserve our honor and respect, as we dedicate this year's listing of the Century Club to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Figures need correcting

By Jerry Mixon, director
MBCB Stewardship Dept.

and churches undue stress or difficulties in attempting to explain this error to their congregations.

In the March 31 Cooperative Program special insert in The Baptist Record, we celebrated Mississippi Baptist churches' giving to the work of the Lord through the Cooperative Program with pictures, articles, graphics, and figures.

We deeply regret the figures printed last week as "CP Gifts" in The Century Club listings on pages CP-2 and CP-3

were in error, and that the Cooperative Program budget reproduced on page CP-4 was for the year 2010 and not 2011.

When we discovered these mistakes after the newspaper was printed, the correct figures were posted as soon as possible on the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board web site (www.mbcdb.org). We also decided to reprint the Cooperative Program special insert this week with the correct figures that you see along the outside of these two pages and on page CP-4.

We sincerely apologize if this oversight caused some of our pastors

and churches undue stress or difficulties in attempting to explain this error to their congregations.

Together we have a long history of cooperation and faithful support for reaching Mississippi and the world for Jesus through the Cooperative Program. Thank you for entrusting us each year with the opportunity to partner with you to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

We have republished the special insert this week not only to make the necessary corrections, but also to again highlight and celebrate the sacrificial giving of our churches. Thank you to the pastors, churches, and all Mississippi Baptists for your faithfulness to the Lord.

One day we shall all gather around the throne and lay our crowns at the feet of Jesus. Until then, we ask for your prayers, personal involvement, and continued support as together we seek to reach Mississippi and the world for Jesus.



... Thank You

"But generous people plan to do what is generous and they stand firm in their generosity." Isaiah 32:8

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$100,000 - \$149,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
ADAMS/CLIFF TEMPLE	26,490.73
NESHOBIA/SPRING CREEK	25,130.85
MID-DELTA/SKENE	22,983.80
CALHOUN/PLEASANT HILL	19,263.49
SCOTT/BRANCH	17,130.69
NEWTON/SULPHUR SPRINGS	17,070.70
TISHOMINGO/NEW PROSPECT	16,442.06
RANKIN/ROCK HILL	16,394.67
LAFAYETTE/COLLEGE HILL HEIGHTS	15,131.21
JACKSON/RIVERSIDE	14,888.74

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$150,000 - \$249,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
SCOTT/SPRINGFIELD	39,876.48
PONTOTOC/ECRU	37,853.57
BENTON/TIPPAH/DUMAS	36,617.34
LINCOLN/NEW PROSPECT	35,346.41
PEARL RIVER/CENTRAL	31,270.66
HOLMES/FBC LEXINGTON	30,600.33
RANKIN/PUCKETT	30,423.74
LEBANON/RAWLS SPRINGS	30,037.00
RANKIN/CATO	29,544.38
ADAMS/HIGHLAND	28,863.39

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$250,000 - \$499,999

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
RANKIN/PELAHATCHIE	69,362.41
PERRY/FBC RICHTON	64,804.00
PIKE/CENTRAL	59,838.39
COV-JEFF DAVIS/FBC COLLINS	57,155.91
WAYNE/PEASANT GROVE	55,478.80
LAFAYETTE/ANCHOR	55,036.80
GEORGE/GREENE/BARTON	52,404.87
LAWRENCE/NEW HEBRON	52,395.72
COV-JEFF DAVIS/WHITE SAND	52,307.92
LAUDERDALE/WESTWOOD	52,307.45

CHURCH OFFERING CATEGORY: \$1,000,000 and above

ASSOCIATION/CHURCH	CP GIFTS
MONTGOMERY/FBC WINONA	163,790.18
LAUDERDALE/FBC COLLINSVILLE	121,239.70
CHICKASAW/FBC HOUSTON	118,099.05
METRO/HILLCREST	100,531.23
SIMPSON/FBC MAGEE	100,205.61
LAWRENCE/MONTICELLO	100,115.48
JONES/INDIAN SPRINGS	97,000.36
RANKIN/MCLAURIN HEIGHTS	93,198.31
MARION/NORTH COLUMBIA	91,982.53
ALCORN/WHEELER GROVE	91,410.19

2011 MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST
COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BUDGET

Global Missions/SBC

17.63%	International Mission Board	\$5,818,243
8.03%	North American Mission Board	\$2,650,056
7.81%	Theological Education	\$2,577,452
1.20%	SBC Operations	\$396,023
0.58%	Ethics/Religious Liberty Comm.	\$191,411
35.25%	SUBTOTAL	\$11,633,105

Christian Education

8.83%	Mississippi College	\$2,915,355
7.04%	William Carey University	\$2,324,394
3.28%	Blue Mountain College	\$1,081,257
1.12%	Board of Ministerial Education	\$369,401
0.17%	Education Commission	\$66,593
20.44%	SUBTOTAL	\$8,747,000

State Benevolent Institutions

2.57%	Church Retirement & Protection	\$849,281
1.96%	Baptist Children's Village	\$648,358
1.26%	MS Baptist Foundation	\$421,053
1.07%	Christian Action Commission	\$354,000
0.21%	Historical Commission	\$70,397
0.03%	MS Baptist Health Systems	\$9,678
7.12%	SUBTOTAL	\$2,352,707

State Missions

0.50%	Collegiate Ministry	\$2,105,708
2.75%	Woman's Missionary Union	\$906,952
2.21%	Men's Ministry	\$730,561
1.91%	Missions Mobilization	\$629,601
1.56%	Mission Strategy	\$514,634
1.10%	Church Planting	\$363,242
0.88%	Stewardship	\$280,326
16.70%	SUBTOTAL	\$5,541,024

Executive Leadership & Communication

2.58%	Business/Financial Services	\$851,112
1.78%	The Baptist Record	\$586,278
1.51%	Executive Administration	\$497,480
1.31%	Communication Services	\$432,586
0.98%	Computer Information Services	\$323,534
0.39%	Convention & Convention Comm.	\$128,349
8.89%	SUBTOTAL	\$2,819,359

Church Growth Ministries

2.50%	Discipleship & Family Ministry	\$826,223
1.97%	Capital Needs	\$650,000
1.05%	Sunday School	\$543,426
1.39%	Church Music	\$457,937
1.38%	Church Growth	\$448,540
1.19%	Pastor/Leadership Development	\$391,408
0.90%	Evangelism	\$297,493
0.89%	Church-Minister Relations	\$283,703
11.66%	SUBTOTAL	\$3,500,499

GRAND TOTAL

\$33,001,945

Shiloh has heart for missions

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Shiloh Church is located in the small community of Sontag in Lawrence County, northwest of Monticello. In this rural Mississippi setting, the church has participated in significant ministries over the years and has flourished. In the belief of the pastor, that's because of a commitment to missions — especially through the Cooperative Program.

The church has been ministering to the community since 1845. Andy Fullington is the pastor. "God is doing some great things here," Fullington said. "He is moving in the hearts of people and they really seem on fire for God right now... I think a revival has broken out."

The church recently dedicated a new fellowship hall. "It's been a privilege just to be a part of what God is doing here," Fullington said. "This April, I will have been pastor two years, but I did a six month interim prior to that. This is my first pastorate, my first church, and the people really stepped out on faith when they called me. We're kind of — how should I word this? — in the middle of the country, but people come from all over."

"Missions are at the heart of Shiloh, and have always been at the heart of Shiloh," Fullington continued, "not only in just giving, but in serving. We still have a great program for RAs, GAs, and Acteens. We'll have in the high 80's (in attendance) on Wednesdays, and Sunday School will run from 110-120. Discipleship training will run from 70-80 on average."

The church has been giving more than 20% to the Cooperative Program for years. "I looked back to the 1980's to see when the church was really giving. In the late 80's and early 90's, we were giving 23% - 24%. From 1995 to 2006, the church gave 25%. The church went through a period without a pastor and things got a little rough, but even then the church was able to give 20% and this doesn't include Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, and other special offerings."

In recent times the church has maintained giving to Cooperative Program at 27.5%. "We've been able to do that even in the middle of a building campaign," said Fullington. "The Lord is working through the people here. It's very humbling. We're mostly just middle class, hard working folks who believe in giving generously to the Lord."

"Even while we've been maintaining the 20%-plus level of giving, we've gone through three building programs," Fullington stated. "One was the educational wing which was paid off in five years. Another was the remodeling of our nursery, and that's been paid off, and a remodeling of our sanctu-



A PASTOR'S HEART — Andy Fullington has been pastor of Shiloh Church, Sontag, for two years. Fullington states that "missions have always been at the heart of Shiloh." (Photo by Tony Martin)

ary, which is paid off. In a lot of churches, missions are one of the first areas cut when the church is building but we've been able to maintain at least 20% for well over 20 years."

Fullington received the call to ministry about three years ago. He started seminary at the New Orleans extension branch. He owns a landscaping business. His wife Donna teaches at Hillcrest School in Jackson and the couple has two children.

Fullington is bivocational. "As long as the Lord allows me to be bivocational, I'll keep the landscaping business," Fullington said, "but the work of the church always takes precedence."

The church has been loving and faithful, according to Fullington. He commutes daily from Terry. "That has been good, because our youth pastor has been able to take advantage of the parsonage," he said. "He was able to come on board after I'd been here a month. He's the first youth pastor this church has had."

Fullington believes part of his responsibility as pastor is to "sort of inject an excitement for missions into the church. If the pastor isn't excited about going and being involved in missions, it's going to be difficult to inspire the rest of the church."

Fullington is also a cattle farmer and has been for over 20 years. "I've come to see that it's time to slack off some in tending to cattle, and maybe it's time to tend to some sheep."

"We give all credit to the Lord for what He has done," Fullington said. "Missions were at the heart of Jesus. We're His hands and feet. Shiloh means 'place of peace,' and it's been a wonderful place of peace for my family and me."

Myanmar quake claims Baptists; officials shun relief

KYAKUNI, Myanmar (BP) — A three-day Baptist meeting in eastern Myanmar turned fatal March 24 when an earthquake struck near the Laos and Thailand border. Twenty-three people were killed and 50 others injured when a Baptist church building in Kyakuni, Myanmar, collapsed.

Authorities in the military dictatorship that governs Myanmar, which is also traditionally known as Burma, are not allowing foreign relief workers into the affected areas. Myanmar Baptists are responding by taking collections in their churches and distributing simple supplies such as noodles, plastic sheeting for temporary tents, sleeping mats, and cooking oil.

An estimated 3,152 people are homeless. Nearly 90 villages have been moderately or severely damaged, encompassing more than 18,000 people.

The village where the Baptist church was located was destroyed. Not one building or structure was left standing. Government officials told survivors that they will not rebuild this village. Some have moved to neighboring communities. The majority, however, moved

cracked and came crashing down, using tents as their new homes.

Information about the true scale of the disaster has been slow to emerge, given the region's mountainous terrain, linguistic barriers, and security concerns. Communication systems and infrastructure are also poor in this area.

"From what we hear, the Lahu villages are the worst hit," a Baptist worker on the Thai border said. "Myanmar Baptists are using their own funds to try to help, at least with this initial response."

In the midst of their grief and distress, Myanmar Baptists, with some assistance from Southern Baptists, are looking past their own troubles to help their neighbors.

The Baptists were in the middle of a worship service when the ground began to shake violently. Screaming church members scrambled outside as the building



FATAL QUAKE — Residents of Tar Lay village in Myanmar's Shan state examine fissures in the main road caused by a March 24 earthquake that destroyed much of the community near the Laos/Thailand border. Twenty-three people were killed and 50 others injured when a Baptist church building collapsed in Kyakuni while a three-day meeting was being held there. (BP photo)

est-hit areas are no longer safe because of cracks in the foundations and walls. No evacuation centers have been formed. People made their own temporary shelter from the plastic sheets and local grass.

The damage was so overwhelming that Baptists from four associations broke through strict cultural barriers, reaching out to help people who were not part of their own community.

"In Myanmar, people interact within their own people groups. The Shan people help the Shan. The Wa people help the Wa," a Baptist representative in Thailand explained.

Baptist pastors in the area say they have never experienced anything like this disaster. Three-story buildings were flattened to the ground. The roads have fissures and gaps, making them impassable for buses and large vehicles.

Warnings squawked over loudspeakers about staying out of homes until structures can be checked. A Baptist pastor said buildings in the hard-

ship service. Afternoon service, 1:15 PM. Franklin McClelland, speaker. Joe Anderson, pastor.

6. Mount Olive Church, Baldwin: Revival, April 10 - 13; Sunday service, 10 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. Drama /worship followed by lunch, and afternoon service at 1:15 p.m.; Monday-Wednesday, 7 p.m.; Randy Bostick, speaker; Kenneth Leslie, music; David Haynes, pastor.

7. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch: Revival, April 10 - 13; Sunday worship 10:30 AM and 6 PM; lunch at 12 Noon; youth emphasis 6 PM; Monday-Wednesday, 7 PM; Wayne Talley, speaker; Richard Fortenberry, music.

Faith Church, Charleston: Homecoming, April 13 - 17; 6:30 PM nightly; Tommy Clark, Adam Blair, Randy Byrd, Truman Scarborough, and John Goldwater, speakers; David Blackwell, music.

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1. Kaylor Lewis

1. Nine nursing students, one nursing faculty member, and one biology student from William Carey University participated in a medical mission trip to Honduras with the Baptist Medical & Dental Mission International (BMDMI) during spring break. BMDMI has served Central America since 1974, ministering to the less fortunate through sharing about Christianity and treating medical needs

free of charge. The WCU group joined a team that consisted of 39 people from four states and 22 churches, to serve the people of Honduras in a variety of ways. The medical clinic saw 2068 people and the pharmacy filled 15,479 prescriptions over the course of the mission. The dental clinic saw 320 patients and pulled 735 teeth, and the glasses team checked the eyes of 303 people and supplied 258 of

2. Karen J. Nichols, president of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), spoke to the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine (WCU-COM) students on March 25 in the Academic Building of the WCU-COM medical complex. Nichols is the 114th AOA president, and also the first female president. She is the dean of the Midwestern University/Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (MWU/CCOM). In Oak Brook, IL. Shown are Darrel Lovins, dean of the WCU-COM, Nichols, and Tommy King, president of WCU.

3. After 75 years the Southern Literary Festival is returning to its birthplace at Blue



2. Lovins, Nichols, and King

Mountain College. The 75th Southern Literary Foundation, an association of 24 colleges and universities that meet annually to celebrate student creative writing and Southern writing by professionals, will be held April 7-9 on the BMC campus. The festival is open and there is no admission charge. Seven authors and playwrights – Sam and Mary Donnelly Haskell, Margaret McMullan, Robert Hamblin, Robert Dalby,

Ben McClelland and George Kehoe – will discuss and share literature with students and faculty members from the Southern Literary Festival Association. The 2011 festival begins at 7 p.m. Thursday and concludes at noon Saturday. Sessions will be held in Garrett Hall Auditorium, Fisher-Washburn, Guyton Library, and Whitfield Residence Hall. For the complete schedule, go to www.bmc.edu/slf.

Social networking ripe for marital discord; counselors advise caution

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Surveys that show Facebook, the popular Internet social networking site, being cited more and more in divorce cases should make spouses think twice before "friending" someone of the opposite sex, experts say.

A 2010 survey by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers showed that 81% of "the nation's top divorce attorneys" reported an increase in social networking websites being used as evidence in divorce cases. Facebook, the subject of a recent hit movie, is the leader, being cited in 66% of cases that involve online evidence.

"We're coming across it more and more," clinical psychologist Steven Kimmons of Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood, IL, said in a news release. "One spouse connects online with someone they knew from high school. The person is emotionally

available and they start communicating through Facebook. Within a short amount of time, the sharing of personal stories can lead to a deepened sense of intimacy, which in turn can point the couple in the direction of physical contact."

The Facebook-divorce link has lately been discussed widely in the social media realm, thanks to a survey from the United Kingdom supposedly showing Facebook being at least partially blamed for one in five of all divorces. The data is from a U.K. online divorce service that found the word Facebook appearing in 989 of the company's 5,000 divorce petitions, all of which were uncontested, The Wall Street Journal reported. The company's managing director called the survey unscientific.

Whether or not Facebook is a reason for one in five divorces, it is becoming an increasing problem in marriages, Kimmons and other marriage experts say.

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE Recognize God's Presence

Psalm 31:7-10, 14-16, 21-24

By Bobby McKay

Perhaps you have heard the story of the Idaho mountain climber and his conversation with God. It seems that he was several hundred feet off the ground and he came across some trouble. He lost his footing and began to fall down the side of the rocky terrain. As he continued to plummet, he was able to grab hold of a small shrub embedded in the side of the mountain. As he held on for dear life, he began to scream. "Help!" was his repeated cry. All of a sudden, a voice from the heavens boomed around him. "Let go," was the reply the man received from far above. After a few moments of deep thought, the terrified man reacted, "Is anybody else up there?"

Excitement
Psalm 31:7-10
Make a note of the following words written by David in verse



McKay

7-10: affliction, troubles, enemies, distress, grief, sorrow, and sighing. How could this be the vocabulary of someone who is praising God? It was possible for David to honor God while in the middle of hard times because he knew that God was faithful. When our faith is weak, God is not. God's love and mercies are not circumstantial. Many believers are erratic in their zeal for God. His troubles however, did not hamper his excitement and enthusiasm that the Lord was with him no matter what. While admitting to God his difficulties, David was also excited to turn to Him to keep him safe in difficult circumstances. You do not have to fully understand a situation to trust in God's power. In your time of need expect God and all of His power to be right there with you.

Expression
Psalm 31:21-24
David ends this Psalm with the same gesture that we

Expectation
Psalm 31:14-16

You may be asking by now, "How in the world am I supposed to praise God when I am suffering so deeply?" I promise you this type of praise that David shares is possible for me and you. Be advised though, it is not achievable in your own strength. The key is in the expectation. If you expect time, humanistic psychology, or medicine alone to help you conquer grief or depression, you will be continually disappointed. Only when we place our faith and trust in God can we embark on the journey of healing and recovery. David appreciated the sovereign power of God and he turned to Him to keep him safe in difficult circumstances. You do not have to fully understand a situation to trust in God's power. In your time of need expect God and all of His power to be right there with you.

through Christ who strengthens me!" We often quote this as a stand alone verse but friends, all the verses before, leads to this verse...we must rejoice in all things...we must keep our thoughts on the things of Christ...we must learn to be content and then we can do all things through Christ because we have found Him to be faithful in all things. Paul had discovered through his experiences that God was faithful to handle the stresses of life. He allowed God to guide his thoughts. He allowed God to show him freedom that comes from trusting.

As we close this letter, we find a thankful, joyful Paul whose final words to the Philippians was a blessing for God to meet all their needs. May Paul's words echo down to us, for we can stand firm when we, together, rejoice in all things. God is faithful.

Grace is a conference speaker and Bible teacher and is a member of First Church, Clinton.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE Never Let Up

Philippians 4:1-23 Focus 4:1-9, 11-13, 15-19

By Cyndi Grace

Stress. Burnout. Anxiety. Much of society functions daily with these maladies. We are tired, irritable and just not in a very good mood. We have too much on our plates and have lived like that for so long we think it is normal. It is not. Paul starts today's lesson with the words, "Stand firm in the Lord." This is where we find victory!

This week's passages might indicate the Philippians had a problem relying on God, which was causing a rift between some believers—good people but perhaps under stress. It was not easy to be a Christian in the early church. Lives were at stake and nerves were on edge. To this Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord always!" Strange thing to say in the midst of turmoil and disagreements but Paul was not just speaking lofty words to comfort his friends; he had experienced pain and knew the power of rejoicing. Acts 16:22-28 is a very familiar passage but a review would serve to enhance today's lesson. In this we find Paul and Silas arrested, severely flogged, and then thrown in prison. The scripture uses the word "severely" so we know that they were beaten nearly to the point of death before being chained to the walls. This was stress. But Paul and Silas did something strange; they began to pray aloud and sing praises to God. You know the rest of the story...there came a violent earthquake, their chains were loosened, and they were set free (as were the other prisoners who had been listening.) Now look again at Philippians 4:7.

Paul then explains how to remain in that peace. Satan wants nothing more than to defeat you and his first stop is in your mind. What do you think about? No, really, what are your constant thoughts?



Grace

Jesus said what we think is what we become. If you think about how bad things can get, then chances are stress reigns in your life. I believe Paul understood this all too well. Sitting in prison, all alone, gave him much time to think but Paul was determined not to also be a prisoner of negative thoughts. He thought about true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable things. He thought about excellence and praiseworthy things and the result was God's peace. Our victory of standing firm begins with our thoughts but it goes farther than peace. Other benefits include contentment, for Paul had determined in his mind that Christ was all he needed. But wait there's more!!! If he had peace, contentment, and Christ, then he could do and survive anything that came into his life. Here we find an often quoted scripture, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." (NIV) The King James says, "I can do all things

Witnessing Through Media Awards Banquet & Workshop

WHEN:

May 6-7, 2011

Registration opens at 6 p.m. May 6

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Sand Hill Church



2. Bovina Church



3. Edwards and youth

1. **Sand Hill Church**, recently licensed Harold Williams to the Gospel ministry. Shown are interim pastor Scott Hummel, William's, and his wife Becky.
2. Shown is Generations 2011 of **Bovina Church** in Vicksburg. This is a unique choir of ages 4 to 58 that sing each spring at different churches.
3. **Crystal Ridge Church** was honored to have Evan Edwards from Clark County give his testimony March 27. Evan was injured playing football in 1986 when he broke his neck and became a quadriplegic at age 16. Shown are Edwards and some of the students.
4. The Sonrise ensemble group recently performed at the monthly senior adult luncheon at **First Church Jackson**. Shown are the participants. The group is part of Reflections Choir and performs at church and adult care facilities in central Mississippi.
5. **First Church, Pearl**, will host the 31st annual Gospel Singing Jubilee beginning at 6:30 p.m. on May 7. The Chuck Wagon Gang; Tom Frith and the Gospel Echoes; and The Southern Plainsman will be featured.
6. The Jackson Veterans Administration Medical Center and the Mississippi National Guard will be hosting a free day of training on the needs of returning veterans on May 10. Registration begins at 8 a.m. RSVP to Chaplain Marti Reynolds at marti.reynolds@va.gov or (601) 362-4471, ext. 5353.
7. **First Church, Sumrall**, will host the Original Inspirations Quartet members Archie Watkins and Smokey Mountain Reunion April 22, 7 P.M. Free admission but a love offering will be received.
8. **Southside Church**, Aberdeen, will be presenting an Easter cantata entitled Christ the King on April 24, 9 AM.
9. **First Church, Runnelstown**, will host Maxim Ammosov of Jews for Jesus April 17 at 6 P.M.



4. Sonrise ensemble



5. Chuck Wagon Gang at First Church, Pearl

STAFF CHANGES

Ed Wright recently retired as pastor of Morgantown Church, Natchez. He and his wife were honored with a farewell fellowship by the church Mar. 27. He is available for pulpit supply, interim, and transitional pastorates. He may be reached at (601) 442-2009 or 807-4821.



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Bachelor of Music in Contemporary Worship Ministry Degree

This degree is designed to meet the needs of today's churches by preparing our graduates to:

- lead choirs, bands, orchestras, praise teams, age-related music groups, and instrumental ensembles
- acquire proficiency in media technology
- develop thorough musicianship, ministry skills, and relationship skills

Here is what music and worship leaders are saying about the new church music degree at William Carey University:

• From Eric McNair, minister of music, McLean Heights Baptist Church, Pearl, Mississippi:

I am pleased that my alma mater is setting the pace for training church musicians. The degree in church music they have developed has all the components that a musician/minister needs to be successful in today's church. I am proud to be a Carey Winters School of Music alumna!

• From Slater Murphy, minister of music, Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus, Mississippi:

This new degree in church music is academically challenging and yet still practical. I know that the heart of this degree is to train men and women to minister to congregations all around the world using music as a tool.